A Petition and Demand of Right and Justice by one of the Commons of England, *on behalf of himself and the rest.*

In a Letter to his Representative in the present House of Commons.

To M. C. *Esq*;

SIR,

IT is believ'd by Men of greatest Knowledge and Sincerity in Religion, to be one of the greatest and most Dreadful Judgments of God, for a People to be left [illegible] Sin, and to fill up their Measure. But at the same time to be engaged in a War, (which of it self is one of his Judgments, and a Case, wherein they ought more especially to beware of all such Provocations) and to go on resolutely with it, without any regard to the Justice of it, looks very like that Final Judgment of God upon the *Canaanites*; of whom it is recorded, that *it was of the Lord to harden their Hearts; that they should come against* Israel *to Battle, that he might destroy them utterly, that they might have no Favour.* And this seems to be *the Case of this People* at this time. For [illegible] to be a just and reasonable Cause for a War [illegible] ted in the Address of the Lords; on the [illegible] Speech, and in the Proceedings [illegible] those things intermixed in the [illegible] not only unjustifiable and dishonourable [illegible] pected that there is a Secret Judgment [illegible] fore upon serious Consideration [illegible] my State in this Nation at this [illegible] to acquaint you, who serve [illegible] with what I understand of the Case [illegible] behalf of my self, and of all the [illegible]

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ſatisfaction of our Conſciences, and for the Preſervation of the True *Engliſh* Government, and of the Peace of the Nation.

I have been inform'd by Perſons no way ill affected to the Government, That about two years or more, before the Revolution, there was a certain Paper brought in and read, in a Cabal of *Engliſh* Gentlemen in *Holland*, by our late Countryman Sir *Jo. Guiſe*, as of his own Compoſure; upon which it was reſolved not to attempt any thing upon *England*, till they ſhould hear of the Queens being Deliver'd of a Son; and then to proceed upon that point of its being a *Suppoſititious Child*: That there was a conſtant Correſpondence kept between thoſe Gentlemen and ſome Conſpirators in the Court of King *James*, by whoſe Treacherous Importunities he was put upon divers Illegal things, on purpoſe to raiſe and heighten a Prejudice in the People againſt him: And particularly, that of ſending the Biſhops to the *Tower*, and the Buſineſs of *Magdalen* Colledge, &c. And that a Principal Actor in thoſe tings was the E. of *Sunderland*, then Principal Secretary of State, if not alſo Preſident of the Counuil: And I have been farther inform'd by another, who was then a *Roman Catholick*, but ſince left them, and goes conſtantly to Church, that he hath heard Father *Peters* himſelf relate, how he was brought into the Privy Counil contrary to the Inclination of King *James*, and ſore againſt his own Will, by the Means of the ſaid E. of *Sunderland*.

And that all this is true, there are *Great and Violent Preſumptions* inducing us to believe: We may remember the Principles and Aſpiring Reſtleſs Spirit of the late E. of *Shaftsbury*, whoſe Relation *Sunderland* was; how he was diſcharged of his Chancellorſhip in 73. Committed to the *Tower* in 76. Indicted for High Treaſon in 81. and upon *Ignoramus* return'd, notwithſtanding all the Evidence produced againſt him, fled into *Holland*: What a deſperate *Conſpiracy* there was to *have Aſſaſſinated the King and Duke of* York in 83. and *another Conſpiracy of divers Lords and Gentlemen* at the ſame time: The *Invaſion of* Monmouth in 85. and upon his Defeat, how many, and of what Principles they were, who withdrew into Holland. We may alſo remember how great a Favorite the Earl of *Sunderland* was in the Court of of King *James*; how to confirm the Kings good Opinion of him, he *profeſſed himſelf a Roman Catholick*; and yet at laſt, after all was diſcovered by the King, that he was turn'd out of his Secretaries Office, and out of the Council alſo.

And

And together, with theſe things may be conſider'd that ſubtile and *wicked Contrivance and Artifice to abuſe the People* in their Belief of a Suppoſititious Son, Intituled, *A Memorial from the Engliſh Proteſtants*, &c. pretended to have been ſent hence by an Expreſs to Monſieur *Benting* at the *Hague*, by ſuch as ſhould be known afterward; but altho' the matter was referred to the Examination of a Free Parliament, have never to this Day openly diſcover'd more of themſelves, than their Principles of *Deiſm*, that is, in plain *Engliſh*, *Apoſtacy*, obſervable in the Concluſion, beſides, moſt *abominable Hypocriſy* in other parts of it, much leſs ever appeared to make good their Pretences in Parliament; or argue the Caſe *viva voce*.

Nor is the Wickedneſs and Subtilty of the Conſpirators leſs obſervable in that they could prevail with ſo conſiderate a Perſon, as *the Prince*, to ſuffer ſo foul a *Calumny* to be inſerted *in his Declaration*, after he had ſo publickly own'd the Legitimacy by conſtant Publick Prayers in his own Chappel; of which thoſe ſpecial *Proteſtants* complain as matter of Aſtoniſhment to them.

To conclude theſe Preſumptions, we may from all this, but much more from their Actions ſince, perceive, What *a Deſperate and Wicked Faction*, we have gotten-up amongſt us, of Deiſts and Apoſtates, who tho' apparently Men of no Religion, or who have little regard to Right or Juſtice, pretend much concern for the *Proteſtant Religion*, and the *Rights of the People*; but cannot reaſonably be believ'd, to intend other then the Subverſion of the *Chriſtian Religion*, and of the *True Engliſh Government* in this Nation; that is, both of Church and State; So that no Good, but Confuſion and Deſolation is to be expected till this Conſpiracy be broken. And to what Confi[illegible] grown, may be obſerved in their procuring ſuch [illegible] to *Hannover*, to be ſent on ſuch a Bu[illegible]

Such Preſumptions, as theſe m[illegible] great Importance of the Matter, deſerve [illegible] ſtrict Examination of it: For if theſe th[illegible] has been a moſt abominable *Abuſe* of the Peop[illegible]tion, ſo much to their *Shame* and *Diſhonour*, as is [illegible]e parallell'd in any Hiſtory: Nor is that greater than t[illegible]nd Wickedneſs; and their Imprudence, in my Opinion, no leſs than that: For whereas *the Cauſe of this People* by fair and reaſonable Propoſals might be made Juſt and Honouble, as well in reſpect of Religion, as of Civil Right; had we but kept within the Moderation of

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the Lords Addreſs; things are ſo precipitated by this Deſperate Faction, through the Folly & Madneſs of the Abuſed people, that it is made the Common Intereſt, not only of all *Roman Catholicks*, upon the Score of Religion, but *of all Kings and Princes* for Preſervation of their own Eſtates, to engage for the Suppreſſion of *ſo Dangerous an Example*; and great occaſion is given for *Civil Diſſentions* and Wars at home, and for Invaſions from our Neighbours on behalf of other more immediate Succeſſors. Beſides the *Acts* will be *void* in themſelves, and in Conſcience, by reaſon of the manifeſt Injuſtice of them; and quite contrary to what is deſign'd, all ſuch *Unlawful Oaths oblige none to Performance*, but all to *Repentance*, and to their utmoſt Endeavours for *Reſtitution*, without which, there can be no hope of Pardon or Salvation. And for the *Proteſtant Religion*, and the *Glory of the Inſtrument*; I can ſee nothing in all this, but the greateſt Scandal to the one, and Infamy to the other, that their greateſt Enemies can deſire. So that all looks to me like ſuch a Judgment of God, as I mentioned before.

I do therefore, as one of the Commons of *England*, on behalf of my ſelf and the reſt, by you my Repreſentative, *Petition* the Houſe, and as the Servant of God, and in the Name of God, *demand*, That all theſe Matters may be brought to a juſt Examination, and a fair and legal Tryal before we be ingaged in another War, or our Peace and Conſciences diſturbed by any *Oaths*, concerning ſuch Matters; and that we may all enjoy our Rights and Liberties of *Engliſhmen*, without any Impoſition of any ſuch Unjuſt and Illegal Oaths upon us, which have rarely been uſed in the Reigns of any Rightful and Lawful Kings, but only of Uſurpers; proved unſucceſful heretofore, and would be more likely to be the Shame and the Bain of this Government, than any Advantage to it. And that after ſuch Examination, you conſult with your Principals before you Preſume to Paſs ſuch Bills.

Had I thought it needful, I could have named Perſons fit to be examined concerning theſe Matters: and if there be occaſion, ſhall be ready to do it, upon any reaſonable Notice.

19 *Jan.* 170$\frac{1}{2}$.

Your Humble Servant,

E. S.

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